INGRATITUDE

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AN

EPISTLE

TO

------ ------, Esq;

Occasion'd by the late sad Catastrophe of a

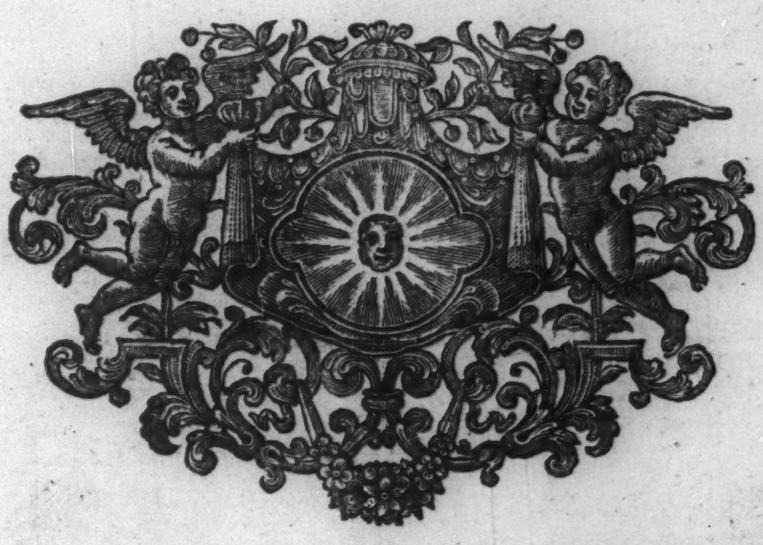
CLERGYMAN at *NORWICH.*

K Txxxxx

By a YOUNG LADY, *Daughter of the said Clergyman.*

Illustrated with various NOTES.

Read THIS *and tremble! you that 'scape the Law.*



AN

EPISTLE

TO

BRITISH MUSEUM

INGRATITUDE.

IN A

LETTER

TO

------ *T******, Esq;

DEAR Author of my Shame, deceitful Swain,
Once my fond Wish, now Source of all my Pain!
False Fugitive! to Love and me forsworn,
Why must I live the Object of thy Scorn?
How hast thou, Wretch! the Innocence betray'd
Of a too credulous unhappy Maid?
Was this thy Friendship to my Father shewn

Did I entice thee to my Father's Houſe?
Did I exact from thee thoſe ſolemn Vows
Of endleſs Conſtancy and Love ſincere,
You whiſper'd in my too incautious Ear?
Was this the Meaning of thy kind Proteſts
Of panting, ceaſeleſs, on my ſnowy Breaſts,
Of dwelling, ever, on my balmy Kiſs,
And finding in my Arms eternal Bliſs?
Vain Legendry! with which Mankind perſuades
The eaſy Faith of unexperienc'd Maids;
Lur'd by the promis'd Heav'n, we fondly ſtray,
And, careleſs, caſt the Joys of Life away.
Bleſt! would the Viſion laſt: but for our Sins,
Where Hope commences, there our Hell begins.

Thus 'tis with me; from Extaſies of Bliſs
I fall, immerged in the low Abyſs
Of Infamy, Contempt, and conſcious Shame,
From the bright Summit of unſpotted Fame;
Like (*a*) her, who from the Paths of Virtue lur'd,
Tho' by religious Principles ſecur'd,

(*a*) Alluding to the Story of Captain *Cranſtoun* and Miſs *Blandy*. Old Mr. *Blandy*, her Father, had entertained the Captain at his Houſe at Bed and Board for a conſiderable Time; during which *Cranſtoun* inſinuated himſelf into the Affections of Miſs *Blandy*, who, though ſhe knew he had a Wife, entertained his Paſſion with equal Ardour. Her Father, however, would not conſent to their Marriage, unleſs he could be legally divorced from his firſt Wife; which the Captain attempting to do in the Courts of *Scotland*, was defeated. But knowing the Narrowneſs of his own Circumſtances, and that Miſs would have a large Fortune upon the Death of her Father, he, under Pretence of ſending her Pow-

By a deceitful Villain drawn aſide,
Renounc'd all Grace to be a Parricide.
My Crimes's as baſe, as heinous, and as vile;
I was the darling and beloved Child
Of a fond Father, whoſe aſſiduous Care
Watch'd to preſerve my Youth from ev'ry Snare;
By Virtue pointed out the Way to Bliſs,
And arm'd me well againſt the Lures of Vice:
Yet his juſt Precepts, tho' the Truths of Heav'n,
By the ſtrong Torrent of my Paſſions driv'n,
Were ſoon effac'd, or given to the Wind,
With ev'ry Grace and Virtue of the Mind;
(*b*) I left his Houſe, that ſacred Aſylum,
Where I and Honour ever were at Home.
Struck with the diſmal News, in wild Deſpair,
He ends a Life he could no longer bear.
My Conſcience wounded, owns the horrid Guilt,
And all the Parricide in me is felt.
Yet think not, Wretch! that thy Account is clear,
But for thy Crimes the Wrath of Heaven fear.
Reflect, Ingrate! and tremble at the Thought,
What dreadful Ruin on our Houſe you brought.
My Fame, my Innocence, my Honour gone,
Deſpis'd by All, by you Alone undone!

(*b*) Mr. *T****** came to pay a Viſit to her Father, and whilſt at his Houſe, made ſome private Overtures to his Daughter, but of what Nature is not particularly known, and can only be judged by the Conſequence: for on *Sunday*,

(c) My fair Repute I never ſhall regain;
On me is fix'd an everlaſting Stain;
Tears, nor ſincere Repentance ever can
Procure Remiſſion from relentleſs Man;
Tho' he's the Tempter, who with artful Wiles,
And cover'd Frauds, our eaſy Faith beguiles:

If yet thy Conſcience is not rouz'd, behold
Another Scene that muſt thy Crimes unfold.
See there the good old Man, whoſe Love to me
Might have imprinted ſome Regard in thee;
Whoſe hearty Welcome thou haſt oft confeſs'd;
Who as his deareſt Friend has thee careſs'd;
Whoſe Table to receive thee ſtill was ſpread,
If not with Dainties, with the beſt he had.
What could he more? His open Heart and Hand,
And all he had, was ſtill at thy Command.
What evil Demon ſtill poſſeſs'd thy Soul,
What could inſpire thee with a Thought ſo foul,
To rob him of his only dear Delight,
Health of his Eyes by Day, and Dream by Night?

(c) Such is the Lot unhappy Women find,
And ſuch the Curſe entail'd upon our Kind.
That Man, the lawleſs Libertine, may rove,
Free and unqueſtion'd thro' the Wilds of Love;
But Woman, Senſe and Nature's eaſy Fool,
If poor weak Woman ſwerves from Virtue's Rule,
If ſtrongly charm'd ſhe leave the thorny Way,
And in the ſofter Paths of Pleaſures ſtray,

I, tho' unworthy, and devoid of Grace,
Held in his Heart the moſt affecting Place;
Yet with a ſacrilegious Hand thou durſt
Tare me from thence: O! be that Hand accurs'd
That could a Parent from his Child divide,
And thou, who could'ſt his weighty Grief deride.
Sure ſome fell Tygreſs was thy ſavage Nurſe,
Thus cruel made, unconſcious of Remorſe.

Can's't thou review the Scene that follow'd ſoon,
And not thyſelf a horrid Villain own?
Can'ſt thou behold the Man, ſo late thy Friend,
(*d*) Frantick and wild, diſtracted in his Mind?
Raving for me he calls, alas! in vain,
The Jewel's loſt he never muſt regain.
Thee, the vile Raviſher of all his Joy,
Who could'ſt his only Happineſs deſtroy;
Who, unprovok'd, coud'ſt plague his private Eaſe,
And break the Fence of his Domeſtick Peace;
On thee he calls for Vengeance from above,
And prays that Heaven his Curſes will approve.

(*d*) The Father on his Return from doing his Duty at the Places before-mentioned, on *Sunday* Evening, being made acquainted with their Flight, immediately took Horſe and purſued them, but without Succeſs. His Grief was ſo great on this Occaſion, that his Reaſon forſook him; and on the *Friday* fol-

Then in the Anguiſh of his wild Deſpair,
Renounces ev'ry Hope, and ev'ry Fear.
No longer able to ſuſtain the Strife,
With furious Haſte he ruſhes out of Life.

Nor even here muſt end the tragic Scene,
What ſavage Cruelty muſt govern Men!
His lifeleſs Corſe, with Blood all over dy'd,
(*e*) The Chriſtian Rites of Burial is deny'd;
And like the Carcaſe of a Dog is thruſt,
Into a Hole, to mingle with the Duſt;
And then, O ſhocking! to complete the Woe,
A pointed Stake muſt pierce his Body thro'.

Can's't thou read this, inhuman as thou art,
And feel no ſoft Relentings at thy Heart?
Can'ſt thou, without Concern, this Ravage ſee,
Yet know the horrid Cauſe remains in thee?
Thy (*f*) large Eſtate may now thy Crimes protect,
But Conſcience will, in Spite of thee, reflect,
And bring thee to a moſt ſevere Account,
And make thee pay in full of the Amount.
That fatal Day aſſuredly will come,
And thou ſhalt feel my Sorrows in thy Doom.

(*e*) The Inqueſt who ſat on the Body of this unhappy Gentleman, brought

Me with contemptuous Brow thou doſt
(g) diſcard;
Puniſh'd I am, and 'tis my juſt Reward;
I have deſerv'd it all; yet not from thee,
Who firſt deluded and inviegled me.
I ſtill had been in all my Wiſhes bleſs'd,
Still of my Virgin Innocence poſſeſs'd;
Still ſhould have had a Father, Home and Friends,
My Virtue's Guardians, and my ſure Defence,
Had not thy flatt'ring and perſuaſive Tongue,
With *Syren* Muſick, and deluſive Song,
Deceiv'd with gay Delights my artleſs Youth,
And with falſe Gloſſes varniſh'd o'er the Truth.
Abandon'd by my Friends, by all contemn'd,
The Point of Scorn, and by myſelf condemn'd,
Where ſhall I wander, where a Refuge find,
Or Eaſe procure to my afflicted Mind?

Perhaps impregnant by the ſhort-liv'd Bliſs,
I ſoon ſhall know a more ſevere Diſtreſs.
Ah wretched me! that ever I was born!
Was ever one ſo young, and ſo forlorn?

That Heart, then free, perhaps was juſtly
priz'd,
Now ſtain'd with Servitude, ſhould be deſpis'd.

Can'ſt thou plead Conqueſt then? or did I yield,
A willing Subject! e're you took the Field?
Like States attracted by the *Roman* Name,
To be ally'd to Virtue, Wit, and Fame?

JUSTLY is Female Pride repaid with Scorn,
And Cruelty ſhould ſuffer in its Turn;
Who falls by Guile, in artful Beauty's Snare,
May break the Net that would his Freedom bar:
But when, ſuperior to the little Rules
Impos'd by Dotage, and obey'd by Fools;
A generous Maid reveals a tender Mind,
That dares be honeſt, when it muſt be kind,
Complies with Nature, yet on Terms complies
That ſhew ſhe has a Head, as well as Eyes,
Yielding her little Charms, and tender Youth,
To noble Conſtancy, and manly Truth;
She holds her Right in Friendſhip's ſacred Name,
Sublim'd, and ſoften'd by her Sex's Claim.

WHY ſhould Love's Flame diſſolve the Seal that binds
The Bond of Union in conſenting Minds?
What is there in the flying fatal Joy
That while it crowns our Bliſs, it ſhould deſtroy?
Say! is it rais'd too high to keep its Place;
On human Happineſs's narrow Baſe?

To ſome bright Region does it wing its Way,
Where, loſt to her, it muſt for ever ſtray?
Or to its Paradiſe return, and there
For ever dwell with ſome *Turkeſtan* Fair?

WHERE'ER it went then, ſurely then! 'twas flown,
When, weak with Love, I could not keep my own,
For with it Innocence, Content, and Eaſe,
My downy Pillows, and my chearful Days
Were loſt, for ever loſt ----- Why, righteous Heav'n!
Why are the Sexes to each other giv'n?
Their Hands united, and their Int'reſts joint,
When their Affections meet but in a Point?
Imaginary Point! which Fancy lends!
The one beginning juſt where t'other ends.

SAY! greatly falſe! does ſome *Suſſexian* Maid
Her brighter Eyes, and richer Beauty plead?
So boaſts the fooliſh Bird the gaudy Eye,
By which he tempts the ruthleſs Fowler's Eye,
Short is his Joy! and ſoon the glitt'ring Spoil
Shall coſt him dear, encompaſt in the Toil;
Condemn'd, like me, for ever to complain,
A hopeleſs Captive, in a hapleſs Strain.

Some fair, gay, fluttering, idle Thing, whom you,
Muſt, ſcorning, doat on; and deſpiſing ſue;
Her dear, dear Self, vain Bait of empty Show!
Narciſſus-like, admiring in the Beau,
That Shadow of the Sex! to him unkind
Shall give the worthleſs Toy to Merit blind --
Wild *Indians* err not ſo, alike to them
The painted Feather, or the ſolid Gem;
But light Coquets from Men of Genius run,
As flitting Shadows vaniſh in the Sun.

Or wed to Falſhood, thou ſhalt learn to prize
The Worth of Truth, and Honours ſacred Ties.
Too late, too late, by ſad Experience know
How ſharp my Sorrows, and how deep my Woe.

Thus Female Fraud, or Folly ſtill requites
The perjur'd Swain, and Woman, Woman rights.

O dear Revenge! Repriſal ſought in vain!
Is there a Difference 'tween Guilt and Pain?
Alike undone, ſee there a *Hellen* torn
With fierce Remorſe, and here a *Sappho* mourn;
The Fickle feels the Rack of Fortune's Wheel,
The Conſtant only dares herſelf to kill.

Behold! behold the ſweet expiring Maid

O could I learn from her to paint my Flame!
But who would bribe the Ocean with a Stream?
Who dictate uſeleſs Oracles to Fate,
Or tempt the *Indies* with a Golden Bait?

Oh! thou haſt Wit, art Rich in every Grace,
Art forms thy Mind, and Nature paints thy Face.
Yet, tho' ſo rich, Heav'n ſcarce can give thee more,
Tho' thou haſt rifled all my little Store;
Thus all compleat, thus perfect as thou art,
I, ſpoil'd of all Things but a broken Heart,
Still, ſtill I could your only Want ſupply---
I have enough to ſpare of Conſtancy.

Perhaps you think the Virtue, that ſupports
In Battle Calmneſs, Innocence in Courts,
Rejects the Flatt'rer's Lure, the Tyrant's Frown,
And lifts the Martyr to the heav'nly Crown,
Too meanly proſtituted to the Tyes
That from the low Purſuits of Senſe ariſe;
And the free, tow'ring, all-enquiring Mind,
In Woman's Love, too narrowly confin'd,

Thus ſome, refining Reaſon quite away,
Dazzled with too much Light of Knowledge, ſtray!

The Pow'r that ſtretch'd the Heavens with a Word,
And countleſs Stars upon the Surface pour'd,
Form'd Human-kind but two, that we may know
Our Joys muſt all from that ſtrict Union flow;
A narrow Fountain, but a fruitful Source,
That ſpreads and ſwells, and gathers in its Courſe;
Winds round the World, takes States and Kingdoms in:
Here Kindred, Friends, Societies begin;
Then think, if theſe ſhould your Attention claim,
Who taints the Spring imbitters all the Stream.

In vain in Publick-good he boaſts his Skill,
Whoſe private Vice induces Publick-ill!
Who builds a Name, and hopes the glorious Pile
To laſt unſhaken, and reward his Toil,
The Work with every other Art may grace,
Plain ſolid Honeſty muſt found the Baſe.

Thus, ſince alas! all ſofter Ties are o'er,
And Love, and fond Affection are no more,
A feeble Advocate I weakly plead,
And much unskill'd! call Reaſon to my Aid;

How can it be that he who writes his Name
In Honour's Liſt, devote to honeſt Fame,
When that demands it, ſhould ſubmit to ſtain
The Brightneſs of his Heart with Guilt ſo mean?

Can he whoſe piercing Thoughts diſtinctly ſee
Thro' the low Arts of human Policy,
Pity the Wretch who robs a Nation's Wealth,
Yet ſtoop to take a Woman's Heart by Stealth?
Vain Stealth which boots not him, yet her undoes;
Who looſes her Content does all Things looſe.

Can he whoſe gentle, yet capacious Soul
Sighs for the fierce Extremes of either Pole,
Contemplating all human Ills with Grief,
But thoſe to which his Bounty brings Relief,
Behold, unmov'd, the Wretch himſelf has made
Low at his Feet in ſtreaming Sorrow laid;
In ſilent Anguiſh brooding o'er her Care,
Till decent Pride, quite vanquiſh'd by Deſpair,
In wild Diſtraction to the World proclaim
Her Fate, his Guilt, her Sorrows, and her Shame.

Impossible to think ----- my Fears are vain,
Unjuſt Suſpicion all, and fancy'd Pain.

Indulge, dear Youth! indulge the tender
Thought,
Fools only think Humanity a Fault.
Tears, that from Self-regards, or Paſſions riſe,
Are low-born Miſts that ſully Reaſon's Eyes,
Thoſe of true Pity, like the Dew of Heav'n,
Fall only from on high, to Hero's giv'n;
They raiſe the drooping Head, and bending
Knee,
Quench Nature's Thirſt, and glad the World,
like me.

Let mere Humanity then plead my Cauſe;
If not to Love's, ſubmit to Nature's Laws.
If Love is baniſh'd from thy changed Heart,
Yet ſure ſome Pity there may take my Part.
Look on the wretched Maid by thee undone;
Weigh well her Griefs, and make thoſe Griefs
your own;
Her Tears, that ceaſeleſs fall, from thee they
run,
Thou art the Source from whence they firſt
begun.
O think on her, by thee an Orphan made,
Friendleſs and deſtitute of human Aid;
Caſt on the World a Vagabond for Life,
Without Companion, but my conſtant Grief.
Can'ſt thou be deaf to my inceſſant Cries,
Or ſtand unmov'd to ſee my ſtreaming Eyes?

CANS'T thou, (*h*) like *Amnon*, thruſt me from thy Side,
And hate, that Moment, her thou haſt enjoy'd?
Was my Compliance then ſo great a Crime?
My Guilt inhanc'd within ſo ſhort a Time?
Muſt the Misfortunes I ſo ſharply feel,
By thee occaſion'd, ſtop my laſt Appeal
To thee and Heaven, for all the Wrongs I bear?
Tho' thou doſt not, yet Heav'n will lend an Ear.

O THOU Supreme! Thou Judge of all Mankind!
Let thy poor Suppliant ſome Favour find.
The Frailties of my heedleſs Youth forgive,
And thy poor humble Penitent receive.
Convinc'd, at laſt, I have offended Thee,
I beg thy Mercy on my bended Knee.
My Conſcience wounded, Thou alone can'ſt heal,
Leſſen the pungent Sorrows that I feel.
By Man, ungrateful Man! all Ways oppreſs'd,
By Thee alone my Griefs can be redreſs'd.
Soften the Heart that's on my Ruin bent;
Inſtil Compaſſion; make him to relent,

(*h*) "Then *Amnon* hated her exceedingly, ſo that the Hatred wherewith he [illegible] And *Amnon*

Who, for his Pleaſure, has my Honour ſpoil'd,
And my once Virgin Purity defil'd:
Teach him that Conqueſt over Virtue won,
A Man of Honour ever will diſown;
That 'tis a Crime unworthy of a Man,
With baſe Intrigues a Virgin to trepan;
Still worſe when he has gather'd all the Fruit,
To kill the Stem, and wither up the Root.

F I N I S.